DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 271 153 JC 860 362

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TITLE Middle College: A Ten Year Study.
PUB DATE Feb 86
NOTE 25p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Statistical Data (110)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS College Attendance; *College School Cooperation; Community Colleges; *Cooperative Education; *Dropout Prevention; Followup Studies; *High Risk Students; High Schools; Internship Programs; *Nontraditional Education; Program Descriptions; Student Characteristics; Two Year Colleges; *Urban Education
IDENTIFIERS *City University of New York La Guardia Comm Coll; *Middle College High School NY

ABSTRACT

A 10-year profile is provided of Middle College High School (MCHS), an alternative high school operating under the joint auspices of the New York City Board of Education and LaGuardia Community College. The first sections of the report look at the history and goals of MCHS, explaining that the school was created to reduce the dropout rate among high risk high school students, to improve students' self-concept, and to enhance college and career options by helping students reach their full potential. The next sections focus on MCHS's instructional programs, student characteristics, and the admissions process which admits students from junior high school or high school. Rates of retention and absenteeism of MCHS students are contrasted with those of students from other alternative schools and public high schools, and MCHS's career education component, which features trimester-long non-paying internships once a year, is described. Next, the report describes policies regarding college credit, outlines placement procedures and the positive features of the program, provides comparisons of the competency test scores of MCHS students and those of other alternative school and public school students, offers a profile of MCHS faculty, describes the financial base for the program, and lists articulation benefits. The final sections present research data on the progress of the Class of 1984 from its admission in 1981, 5-year statistics on graduation rates, percent of students accepted by postsecondary institutions and Regents Scholarships awarded, and student responses to a 1985 folow-up survey. (EJV)

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MIDDLE COLLEGE:

A TEN YEAR STUDY

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February 1986

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Janet E. Lieberman
LaGuardia Community College
February, 1986

MIDDLE COLLEGE: A TEN YEAR STUDY

HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

In 1971, Janet Lieberman and a special group of educators designed a Middle College, a collaborative high school/college program directed to the needs of urban high school youth. Funded by grants from The Carnegie Corporation and the Fund for the Improvement for Post Secondary Education, these educators planned Middle College from 1972 to 1974. In 1974, Middle College High School opened as an alternative high school under the joint auspices of the New York City Board of Education and LaGuardia Community College of the City University of New York. As an alternative high school directing its efforts to the student drop-out problem, Middle College admits prospective tenth grade students, who have been identified by teachers and counselors, as high risk youngsters with college potential.

Despite the high risk nature of the student body, totaling approximately 460 students, about 85% graduate, and of these 75% go on to college at LaGuardia or elsewhere. Six major national citations: The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (High School: A Report on Secondary Education in America, 1983), The National Commission on Excellence in Education (A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform, 1983), The Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE Award) and the Rockefeller Foundation (Review of Intervention in the Field of Prevention of Adolescent Pregnancy, 1983) have recognized the excellence of Middle College. Newsday selected Middle College as the High School of the Year for Community Service (1983). Pittsburgh's KQED, Channel 4, and PBS "Frontline" of New York City have also featured the school's accomplishments. Recently, the City University of New York encouraged other units to replicate Middle College and

the Governor in a "Message to the Legislature" of 1985 indicated specific support for new middle colleges.

Goals

The goals of Middle College are: to reduce the drop-out rate by improving students' academic performance, to improve students' self concept, and to enhance college and career options by helping students reach their full potential. The high school college collaborative is a model that encourages potential drop-outs to succeed through three major supports: visible peer models, small classes, and superior academic and support services. The internship program, patterned after the college's cooperative education program, gives students success, relates school to work opportunities, and therefore develops motivation and a sense of purpose. Records of the last ten years in academic achievement and in retention rates reflect the impact of the total program and constitute an evaluation of the approach.

Instructional Programs

Designed to meet the New York State education requirements for a high school diploma, the academic program follows both New York City Board of Education and New York State curriculum requirements of English, social studies, mathematics, science, music/art, language and physical education. The school also provides a career education component which permeates the academic program and serves as the school's dominant theme. Students must also pass competency tests (RCT's) in reading, math, and writing and City-wide exams in English and social studies. Records reflecting achievement scores on these measures are in the section on the school's profile.

Student Body Profile

Understanding the nature of the program begins with the admission process, which defines the student body. Concentrating on a high risk population, Middle College informs guidance counselors of District 24 and 30 in

Queens that we seek students from the ninth grade local junior high schools who have a record of more than 20 days absent and multiple failures. The criteria for application are: (1) a high rate of absenteeism (2) three or more subject area failures (3) identified social and emotional problems stemming from the home environment (4) evidence of some potential, which we interpret as present in all students.

Admissions

The admission process begins with the assistant principal for guidance of Middle College calling seven feeder high schools in the two geographically contiguous school districts. He asks the guidance counselors to gather a group of students who might benefit from the Middle College Program. LaGuardia Middle College personnel visit each of the seven schools, talk to the students, and answer questions. At that time, students interested in applying fill out applications with their parents' permission. Realistically, any student in Western Queens can apply.

Next, the principal of the junior high feeder schools receives a list of applicants. He or she can add or subtract names; we add significant information from the records and Middle College works from that "exploded" list, using our Middle College criteria. Then we go back to the junior high school, add some, subtract some, and negotiate for the final 20 applicants.

We then bring those 140 students in for an interview at Middle College; their peers, current students, interview them. The main purpose of this interview is to have the new admits "buy into" the school, develop a relationship, and acquire a sense of the atmosphere.

Following the interview, we notify the central Board of Education Admissions Office of the names and then the High School Admissions office notifies the students of acceptance. In June, Middle College holds an orientation for

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students and parents. In summary, the calendar is:

October 1	Visit to the junior high schools
November	Applications from students
	Revisits to schools, conference with principals
December	Print out received from Central Admissions
January	Applicants interviewed by students
February	Middle College notifies High School Admissions
March	Students notified
June	Orientation

The High School office has control of the process. One purpose of the centralized control is to guarantee that Middle College does not "cream" the students (e.g. take the top qualified students). Two years ago, the Board of Education instituted a random applications process. As a result, we had a much more highly qualified group. Cecilia Cullen, principal of Middle College, objected to being part of the random system and the school was permitted to go back to our hand selection process, because Middle College proved that it took the lowest level of applicants.

Each year, Middle College admits 140 students out of 600 applications through the process described. Students with Limited English Proficiency and Special Education students are not accepted, nor are students who can not function in an open, free, college environment. We do not refuse any student because of academic deficiencies. Most of our entrants have acquired minimal credits in the ninth grade, although they are technically tenth grade registrants. According to the Board of Education statistics in 1979, about 53 percent of our students were more than two years retarded in mathematics and 40% were 2 years or more below grade in reading.

Incoming Skills Profile

Years	79-80	80-81	81-82	83-84*	84-85*	85-86
Percent functioning 2 years or more below grade in reading	40.5%	37%	27%	21%	21%	36%
in mathematics	53.9%	52.6%	42.9%	51.2%	39.7%	

*Years of Random Selection

In addition to the major annual admissions effort, we admit students during the course of year. In December and March, we take in additional students who have failed in other high schools. Although our success rate with these students is not as high, we do this as a cooperative response to the community. There are currently 200 on that waiting list but we can only accept 50 each year, so the ratio of acceptance for that population is one out of four. The goal of Middle College is to maintain an enrollment of 450 students (full enrollment capacity).

The economic, ethnic and sex distribution for the past six years is:

	1980	%	1981	%	1982	%	1983	%	1984	%	1985	%
Black	109	25	108	24	122	26	108	21	99	20	95	21
White	189	43	207	45	201	43	231	42	222	47	221	45
Hispanic	133	30	132	29	134	29	153	30	150	32	164	33
Asian	10	2	10	2	10	2	7	1	5	1	6	1
Male	186	43	204	45	232	49	227	45	213	44	202	41
Female	256	57	253	55	237	51	272	55	267	56	284	58
Total	442		457		467		499		480		486	

About 40% of these students are on public assistance.

Currently we have a waiting list from the regular Junior High School admissions process of 600, a ratio of 4 applications for each place in the school. Students not accepted go back to central admissions and usually go to the neighborhood high school. Once admitted to Middle College the students spend two cycles (26 weeks) in academic classes and one in career education, out of a total of nine cycles in three academic years. The average daily attendance statistics for the high schools in the last seven years' are:

	78-79	79-80	80-81	81-82	82-83	83-84	84-85
City-Wide	76.48	77.71	77.93	78.06	79.88	79.8	80.5
Queens	81.79	82.03	81.13	81.14	82.95	82.9	
Alternatives		64.25	64.30	68.13	73.06	72.1	69.7
Middle College	80.67	81.46	82.38	81.59	82.22	80.0	76.6

The daily attendance rate for Middle College, averaged over the last five years is 81%, compared to a city wide published figure of 69% for other alternative schools. The 1986 drop out rate is 5.8%; the city wide published rate is 40%. There are no separate data for control populations exactly like the students of Middle College; the closest approximation is other alternative schools. Our record surpasses that and is equal to the published data on the city wide population which includes the whole range of students

in schools including the special and magnet schools (e.g. Bronx High School of Science). Many investigators have suggested that the real absentee rate in New York City high schools is much higher than reported. Similar reports exist about published drop out and retention rates. The New York City drop out rate is estimated at 50% by the Public Education Association and at 65% by Aspira. On January 9, 1983, the New York Times indicated that 33.9% of all 10th graders were absent 15 times in a term and 30 times in a year; in that year in Middle College 13% of 10th graders were absent 30 times a year. In a study for the classes of 1980-81, the retention rate of Middle College was 90%, but it was almost twice as high for the students accepted from junior high school than it was for those taken from the high school population. The most recent retention rate figure in 1986 was 94.2%.

Another interesting set of statistics is the number of suspensions compared to the average city high school. In spite of our high risk population, our statistics indicate that in 1982 we suspend on a average of 11 students a year out of a city wide average of 84.

AVERAGE NUMBER OF SUSPENSIONS

FOR ALL REASONS

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982
City-Wide	63	88	77	77	84
Your Borough	46	65	61	68	78
Middle College		1	7	9	11

Career Education Component

One of the key factors in the success of Middle College has been the career education/internship program.

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Students go out to work in the tenth grade in non-paying positions acquired by guidance counselors and job developers. The program propels the students and the school toward the community through an internship program that prepares each student, once a year, to engage in an experiential learning activity, typically in an area of community service. The Middle College high school student works in hospitals, schools, police stations, and social service agencies. The plan adapts the cooperative education model used successfully by LaGuardia Community College for a similar type of student, to a younger age group needing different satisfactions.

The goals of the internship program are diversified, but the program's objectives for the student are to:

* Use reality testing to develop process skills and self knowledge to set career and life goals.

* Develop educational plans identifying and based on academic and vocational skills necessary to achieve career and life goals.

* Develop a realistic sense of positive self-esteem.

* Develop job acquisition skills (e.g., resume writing, interview techniques, and development of useful references).

* Understand the protocols of the world of work.

* Develop and appropriately apply coping skills in the work place.

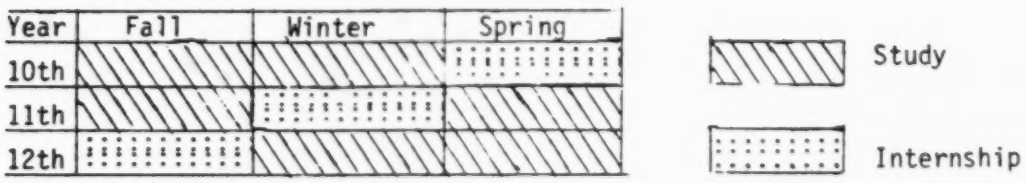
* Integrate the experiences and skills developed in the Middle College career education program with the goals of the LaGuardia Community College Cooperative education program.

* Understand the complex interdependencies of communities, agencies and individuals

These goals are achieved through a program patterned after the College Coop Program. Like the college's preparatory coop courses (Coop Prep) and TAR courses, three "in house" preparation courses are taught. These are

Personal and Career Development I and II and Decision Making. Three internships, one each year, utilize and apply the teachings of each of the courses. The concepts taught in the preparation class, applied on the students' internship, are reinforced by having each internship coupled with a weekly seminar. Similar to the college Coop Advisement program, each student in Middle College is assigned to a career education supervisor who maintains a close relationship, both as teacher and counselor, with the student over the three years. The same faculty person serves as the student's teacher of career education courses, internship monitor, seminar leader, and career education counselor.

Each Middle College student spends three years (tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades) in the school, with each year divided into three trimesters or cycles. The sequence of in-school study and out-of-school full- or part time internships in the community for the typical student follow this pattern:



The First Internship

During the fall and winter of the tenth year students take a two-cycle course called Personal and Career Development (PCD). The first cycle of PCD is devoted to the theme of personal identity. The second cycle concentrates on preparing students for the first internship. The objectives of the PCD sequence are to help students, through a variety of in-class activities to:

* Identify important values;
* Clarify attitudes toward work;

* Make observations about their relationships with others, including their family and peers;

* Identify and examine personal strengths and weaknesses;

* Examine their place in the environment (school, neighborhood, community, city, and worksite);

* Learn the skills needed for internship acquisition...

Students can select internships from three major categories: human services, business technology, and liberal arts and sciences. Most internships are unpaid, but students receive credits towards their high school diploma. These internships are in a variety of governmental agencies and institutions, non-profit community agencies, and occasionally businesses.

The majority of Middle College students have full-time internships; a significant minority have part-time internships. The students and the career education supervisor decide on part or full time according to the students' readiness and competence in basic skills.

Students with deficiencies in basic skills participate in part-time internships, receiving remedial instruction in the early morning before going to their internship site. Additionally, classes typically taught in sequential fashion have been redesigned, when feasible, along thematically coherent patterns. For example, American Studies, a year-long course that had been taught through a chronological approach, has been refashioned into three distinct, nonsequential, cycle-long classes. The new courses, titled Government and Constitution, Cultural Pluralism, and American Foreign Policy, can be taken in any sequence, smoothing the way for the student who will be interrupting formal academic study with experiential learning.

In order to facilitate individual attention and to cope with significant skills deficits, Middle College classes are smaller than those typically found in urban high schools. Regular classes have maximum enrollment of 27 students,

and remedial classes have a limit of 15 students per class, with an average class size of 20.

Second and Third Internships

For tenth year students, the internship selection process is still relatively informal and intuitive, guided sensitively by the career education supervisor To lay the groundwork for a more rigorous selection process, eleventh graders take a course called Decision Making in the spring. Objectives include understanding the relationship between decisions and outcomes, translating values into objectives, identifying strengths and weaknesses, relating values and objectives to a career choice, identifying and using information sources, and setting objectives for the second internship.

Taught by a career education supervisor, the course emphasizes a rational decisionmaking process and gives students the opportunity to examine closely, in light of their first internship experience, their personal strengths and weaknesses, aspirations and fears, and skills and potentials. Students may decide to explore a new career cluster area or to delve more deeply into the same area at the first internship. After the second internship, students meet individually with their career education supervisors to select the senior internship.

The internships and concurrent weekly seminars led by career education supervisors help students design a career action plan that almost always includes post-secondary education training.

During the first internship, seminars focus on work values, job satisfaction, and elementary coping skills. The seminars for the second internship stress the application of decision making skills at the worksite, particularly in relation to interpersonal relationships.

In the senior seminars the student draws together insights and skills into a design for the future.

The success of Middle College's troubled population may be attributed to

several elements in the internship program design:

* The three-year relationship maintained between individual students and their career education supervisors;

* The careful placement of students in work environments that provide not only interesting work tasks but also co-workers and supervisors with whom students can interact positively;

* Close on-site monitoring of the students by the career-education supervisors;

* The staff's careful development of learning sites, which includes assessing the worksite climate and needs and communicating the school's goals to the work supervisor;

* The reinforcement of the concepts acquired by students in and out of the classroom, through the seminar teaching;

* The integrated nature of the experiential and academic learning, with mutual reinforcement;

* The careful fit of the internship with the psychosocial needs of students to provide a source of purposefulness, pride, and self-worth and an external affirmation of the students' ability to function in a world previously perceived as unrewarding, hostile, and uncaring.

The internship is a critically significant part of the program, a component necessary for replication. Analysis of our data shows that in many cases, for this population, the work experience is the first school related success. It represents a positive reinforcement for the individual student to see that he/she can succeed, as it provides enough accumulated academic credit to make graduation an achievable reality. Theoretically the internship provides a formative cognitive experience which moves some students

through the Piagetian stages and provides the experiential dimension to facilitate advanced thinking skills.

Seventy five percent of our students work outside of the program, on an average of 20-25 hours a week. Typical jobs are as checkers in supermarkets, stock clerks in department stores, workers in fast food outlets, and baby sitting.

College Credits

After the tenth year, students have the option of taking tuition free college courses. On the average, each year 90 Middle College students take courses. The range is from 3 credits (1 course) per individual to 15; the highest number of credits ever achieved by any student was 30. These credits are banked and entered on LaGuardia transcripts. In eleven years 500 students, or 30% of the student body have undertaken and completed college courses. The total number of college credits attained by all students is 1500 credits.

These are simultaneous college and high school credits. Students can select from a great variety of courses from every department within the college. As a result, the Middle College curricula is more varied, flexible, and interesting. Middle College counselors decide on the placement of students in college courses. Students may enroll in college courses based on their level of academic ability and maturity. The following criteria help identify students for college class enrollment:

(1) A graduating senior who is nearing completion of his/her graduation requirements

(2) A junior or senior who has demonstrated a satisfactory academic record at Middle College

(3) A student who has satisfactorily completed the sequence of courses in a particular area, (e.g. a student who has completed all high school mathematics through Intermediate Algebra can register for college level pre-

calculus)

(4) A student who has demonstrated a talent or skill in a particular area, e.g. Spanish, Piano, Art, Typing

In addition, all students must complete basic skill prerequisites as demonstrated on standardized tests such as the CUNY Placement Test, the N.Y.C Tests in Reading and Math and N.Y.S. Regents Competency Tests.

Placement Procedures

(1) A Middle College counselor has the responsibility for registration of Middle College students in LaGuardia college courses.

(2) Students who take courses at LaGuardia may be referred to the counselor by their House Advisor, subject teacher, department chairperson, a member of the counseling staff or they may be self referred.

(3) Determination is then made as to whether students are eligible for the specified college course.

(4) A list of students and courses is sent to the Registrar's Office where the registration process is completed.

(5) The counselor advises each student prior to the beginning of courses and periodically monitors their progress during the quarter.

(6) The counselor receives the final transcripts from Registrar's office and informs House Advisor, Department Chairperson, and student of grades.

(7) Post-quarter conference between counselor and student is held for further advisement.

Positive Features of Program

(1) Reduces areas of curricula redundancy in the last year of high school and the first year of college

(2) Advanced nature of college courses allows the high school to concentrate more of its resources on remediation

(3) Serves as a bridge for students between high school and college

(4) Motivates students for higher education

(5) Meets the needs of gifted and talented students

Academic Achievement

Scores on the required competency tests provide another index of the school's impact on students.

All Grades Combined-Reading

		79-80	80-81	81-82	82-83	83-84
City-Wide	Numbers	9458	14233	10734	9808	8843
	% Passing	65.7	74.8	68.7	73.2	77.0
Borough/Alternative		1845	2667	1976	1828	476
		64.0	75.0	70.3	74.2	81.0
Middle College		80	51	20	13	56
		88.7	94.1	100.0	92.3	98.2

All Grades Combined-Mathematics

City-Wide	Numbers	59698	58161	48140	48280	37111
	% Passing	36.3	54.0	36.7	56.0	47.0
Borough/Alternative		12711	11598	9677	9054	837
		40.2	52.5	39.6	55.0	40.9
Middle College		187	104	109	76	123
		49.7	66.3	44.9	44.7	49.5

Interpreting these scores in the light of the degree of earlier retardation of entering students, suggest that the combination of cooperative education and small classes is a winning strategy.

Faculty Profile

All Middle College faculty come from regularly licensed Board of Education qualified lists. Middle College employs a staff of 32 educatons committed to the goals of alternative education. The facts below profile degrees held and longevity at Middle College.

A. Degrees

30 faculty members hold Masters degrees (94%)

10 faculty members in doctoral programs (31%)

B. Longevity

Average length of time employed at Middle College: 4.98 years

Financial Arrangement

The Board of Education pays the salaries of the teachers, the New York State textbook money, and the "other than personnel" services. The college pays the heat, the light, the rent, the electricity. The college also hires and pays for adjunct faculty, additional secretarial hours and supply money, a total contribution of approximately $300,000, which divided by the amount of students averages about $600 per student. That figure excludes rent, which the college pays, but which is not usually included in Board of Education estimates.

The Board of Education provides $2,227 for each student in Middle College High School. The total cost per student is $2,880. This is much lower than the allocation for either a regular high school or a vocational school. Metropolitan Life Insurance Company estimates a per pupil cost for New York City of $3,200.

The Board of Education system works in units; each unit is worth $31,500. Every large high school has 26 base units and every vocational high school has 26.99 units. Middle College has 5 base units. For every 16 students, the Board figures 1 unit. Therefore Middle College has 34.89 units x $31,500 or a total allocation of $1,099,035. Middle College class size runs from 16 to 28 students, with an average size of 20, compared to 34 students in the regular high school. The relatively low student to faculty ratio at a reduced cost is feasible for two reasons: shared resources and cooperative education. Middle College uses the library, the gym, the cafeteria, and the lounges of the college. Classroom spaces are shared; the college uses them after 3 p.m. Also gifted and able students take college classes, freeing instructors and reducing class size. The main monetary saving and economy factor is the cooperative education program which enables at least 1/3 of the students to be out working on sites at any given time. That program substantially reduces class size.

Articulation

Through sharing responsibilities, educators at both the high school and college levels, usually separated by an artificial structural barrier, find opportunities to learn about each other. Administrators cooperate and share facilities and human resources. The benefits of articulation in the instructional area are:

(1) For Middle College faculty

(a) Opportunity to confer and share knowledge and resources in each discipline and coop education

(b) Opportunity to teach college courses as adjunct

(c) Use of library services for research

(d) Availability of audio visual equipment, access to media, library and support services provided by media technicians

(e) Provision of duplicating and reproduction services which enhance development of instructional materials

(f) Use of College amenities: parking and dining room

(g) Use of college laboratories: photography, art, music, data processing, accounting

(h) Use of gymnasium

(2) For college faculty

(a) Having Middle College principal participate as department chair

(b) Understanding levels of students' preparation

(c) Opportunity to plan curriculum for college success

(d) Sharing technological resources (computers) for classes after 3 p.m. and Saturday

(f) Opportunity to teach gifted and talented in college classes, enriching discussion

(g) Broader population for research for dissertations, grants, institutional impact studies, etc

	79-80	80-81	81-81	82-83	83 84	85
JUNE GRADUATES: GRADUATION DATA						
% BY TYPES OF DIPLOMA						
Regular	100.0	100.0	95.7	98.5	94.6	97.2
Regents Endorsed					5.4	2.8
Regents Endorsed/Honor					0.0	0.0
All Regents Endorsed			1.4	1.5	5.4	
% OF CANDIDATES GRADUATING						
City-Wide	85.2	85.9	84.5	84.4	85.5	86.4
Borough/Alternative					82.6	81.6
Middle College	91.1	78.4	73.1	84.6	81.3	87.8

OVERALL PERCENTAGE OF MIDDLE COLLEGE GRADUATING CLASS WHO INDICATED ACCEPTANCE BY A POST-SECONDARY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982
4 Yr. College	____	43.8	32.9	38.3	31.8
Jr./Comm. College	____	39.6	27.6	51.9	41.2
Other Institutions	____	6.2	1.3	0.0	2.4
City-Wide	85.5	90.9	81.5	78.7	80.1
Middle College	____	89.6	61.8	90.1	75.3

REGENTS SCHOLARSHIPS

	1979	1980	1981	1982
Number Awarded	2	1	2	2

	79-80	80-81	81-81	82-83	83-84	85
JUNE GRADUATES: GRADUATION DATA						
% BY TYPES OF DIPLOMA						
Regular	100.0	100.0	95.7	98.5	94.6	97.2
Regents Endorsed					5.4	2.8
Regents Endorsed/Honor					0.0	0.0
All Regents Endorsed			1.4	1.5	5.4	
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REGENTS SCHOLARSHIPS

	1979	1980	1981	1982
Number Awarded	2	1	2	2

Our own figures for admission to college and placement after graduation show:

	1984	1983	1982	3 Yr. Total (1982-1984)
Total Graduates	93	86	85	264
College	67 (72%)	61 (71%)	62 (73%)	190 (72%)
Employment	22 (24%)	18 (21%)	17 (20%)	57 (22%)
Bus/Tech. Schools	1 (1%)	2 (2%)	2 (2%)	5 (2%)
Military	3 (3%)	4 (5%)	4 (5%)	11 (4%)
Total College	67	61	62	190
CUNY	57 (85%)	46 (75%)	52 (84%)	155 (82%)
SUNY	5 (8%)	11 (18%)	7 (11%)	23 (12%)
Private	5 (8%)	4 (7%)	3 (5%)	12 (6%)
Total LaGuardia	13 (20%)	15 (25%)	24* (39%)	52 (27%)
Total 4-Yr. Colleges	36 (54%)	33 (54%)	27 (44%)	96 (51%)
Total 2-Yr. Colleges	31 (46%)	28 (46%)	35 (56%)	94 (49%)
Total in N.Y.C.	59 (88%)	49 (80%)	52 (84%)	160 (84%)
Total outside N.Y.C.	8 (12%)	12 (20%)	10 (16%)	30 (16%)

* Year of Soc. Sec. Problems

Additional Reports

In the spring of 1985, the principal of Middle College surveyed with questionnaires 460 graduates of the Middle College High School spread over 8 years. Of that number, 137 responses were received, coded and tabulated. At the same time the students received the questionnaire, they received an invitation to a 10th Anniversary Party. A total of 137 students responded after two mailings. Twenty percent of the 460 students had moved and were not found.

Who responded?

It can be assumed that those who responded did so because they had positive feelings toward MCHS, skewing the data. The largest number of responses came from the most recent graduating class (30) with 9 responses from the first class. The largest amount of incorrect addresses came from the earlier years.

The majority of the responses were from females (68.6%) who had spent three years at Middle College (83.9%) and who came predominately from one of our seven feeder JHS (70.5%). The data demands more careful analysis to answer the following questions: Do we graduate more females that males? How is that related to enrollment data? What is the significance of that information? Regarding the length of stay and the feeder pattern, we need to analyze the number of students we take in each year who are dropouts from other high schools and their persistence rate.

Career Education at Middle College

The second major component of the survey asked students to identify their internships by category, position and site. Thirty five students could not answer this because they were enrolled in MCHS prior to the start of the Career Education program. The majority of the internships were in unskilled positions (80%). The categories change from: 1st Internship: 59% Human

Services and 49% Business to 3rd Internship evenly split between Human Services and Business. Since the skill level development does not seem to account for this change, it is important to understand the factors responsible for these changes.

Data collected from 137 responses

Armed Services

Of those who responded only six entered some branch of the services; of those six only two completed more than two years. Since recruitment by the armed services is very extensive and high powered it is important to follow up to see why 66% of the students did not complete their tour of duty.

Work

The information of work experience after graduation is hard to classify because there is a lot of information on part time and full time jobs that has to be matched chronologically. The most significant finding is that of those reporting a first full time job (95 students) 50% reported a job in a skilled title (matched to the Dept. of Labor categories) earning $10.00 or more an hour. In addition, 12 reported that they got their first job from their internship.

Higher Education

105 or 75% report that they went on for further education, business school (14), community college (47), or 4 year college (44). The highest single number went to LaGuardia (24). Seventy six percent stayed only one year or received the equivalent of 1 year worth of credits. This figure of 76% matches our estimates of between 75 and 80%. Of seven graduating classes there have been 5 Associate Degrees, 5 Bachelors, 1 Masters and 11 certificates. Since our first class graduated in 1977, at the time of the survey only 3 classes were eligible for Bachelor degrees and of those only 31 answered

the survey so 16% had received BA's.

The data shows that between 1981-83, 75% of our students went on to college and an average of 19% were employed, largely in blue collar jobs, clerical or secretarial positions or construction jobs. Of the students surveyed, 90 out of 137, 65% reported full time jobs. Fifty percent of those were in skilled jobs, earning $10 or more an hour. The same phenomena of delayed education exists with this population as with the mirror image, community college population. Students, after graduation, stop out, earn some money, then reenter the educational pipeline. The usual interval is 3 to 5 years.

Need for Research

The fragmentary nature of the research data demands that Middle College conduct a ten year retrospective study of its graduates to determine the impact of the program and the critical factors in success or failure.

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AUG 1 5 1986